

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
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INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 3324

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, UNSC, SO, ET
SUBJECT: NIGERIANS REMAIN NEGATIVE ON SECURITY COUNCIL ROLE IN
THE HORN

REF: STATE 65221

1. I DISCUSSED WITH MEA AFRICAN DIRECTOR AKADIRI THIS AFTERNOON
THE QUESTION OF MULTILATERAL ACTION ON THE HORN ALONG LINES OF
REFTEL. AKADIRI SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE QUESTION BY
TELEPHONE WITH GARBA JUST PRIOR TO GARBA'S DEPARTURE FROM NEW YORK.
HE HADN'T YET BEEN ABLE TO GET TO GARBA SINCE GARBA'S RETURN THIS
MORNING TO LAGOS. THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR IN ADDIS ABABA HAD
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TELEPHONED YESTERDAY. FINALLY, THE SOMALI AMBASSADOR TO NIGERIA
HAD CALLED ON HIM THIS MORNING TO PRESENT SOMALIA'S VIEWS. THE
UPSTOT WAS THAT NEETHER ETHIOPIA NOR SOMALIA COULD ATTEND AN OAU
MEETING THIS MONTH. BOTH COUNTRIES WISHED TO POSTPONE UNTIL
ROUGHLY THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF APRIL. THE FMG HAD THEREFORE CON-
CLUDED THAT FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO CONVENE A MEETING PRIOR TO APRIL
WOULD BE FRUITLESS.

2. THE FMG CONTINUED TO SEE NO, REPEAT, NO APPROPRIATE ROLE FOR THE TIME BEING FOR THE SECURITY COUNCIL. REFUGEE AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE MIGHT WELL BE NEEDED, BUT THIS COULD BE WORKED OUT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE ONGOING MANDATE OF THE UNHCR. IF INDEED MOST OF THE REFUGEES WERE MOVING FROM THE OGADEN INTO SOMALIA, AS PRESS REPORTS SEEMED TO INDICATE, SOMALIA MIGHT WELCOME SUCH ASSISTANCE. THE ETHIOPIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD POSSIBLE UN ASSISTANCE WOULD BE FOR THE EPMG TO DECIDE. AKADIRI THOUGHT THE US COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE REGARDING THE PROVISION OF ANY SUCH RELIEF SINCE "YOU ARE KNOWN TO BE THE WORLD'S FOREMOST PROVIDER OF HUMANITARIAN AID."

3. AKADIRI BELIEVED THAT THE OAU HAD FAR BETTER CHANCE OF COMING UP WITH AN ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION ON THE HORN THEN WOULD THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE THOUGHT THAT AFRICANS MEETING TOGETHER COULD PRODUCE A RESOLUTION "MEANING ALL THINGS TO ALL PARTIES" WHEREAS SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE MIGHT PROVE MUCH MORE CONTENTIOUS. HE NOTED THAT THE OAU OPERATED BY CONSENSUS RATHER THAN VOTE. AS EXAMPLES OF THE KINDS OF ISSUES HE THOUGHT THE OAU COULD DEAL WITH MORE READILY THAN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, HE CITED SELF-DETERMINATION, WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS, AND A CEASE-FIRE.

4. COMMENT: AKADIRI'S EXPRESSION OF FM PREFERENCE FOR CONTINUED OAU EFFORTS RATHER THAN SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION WAS VERY DEFINITE.
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HE SUGGESTED THERE WOULD BE STRONG OPPOSITION FROM AFRICAN AND POSSIBLY OTHER STATES TO A MOVE SO TO SEIZE THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE MATTER. HE APPEARED READY, HOWEVER, TO ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE IN THE HUMANITARIAN FIELD. PROVIDED THE DECISION TO MOBILIZE SUCH ASSISTANCE CONTAINED NO, REPEAT, NO REFERENCE TO OR IMPLICATION ON SUBSTANTIVE POLITICAL ISSUES (E.G. RECOGNITION OF BORDERS, AUTONOMY, SELF-DETERMINATION, OR CEASE-FIRE), I BELIEVE THE FMG WOULD NOT OPPOSE SUCH ACTION.

5. PARAGRAPH 1 OF REFTTEL INDICATES GARBA "HAS SPOKEN OF NIGERIA BEING ABSOLVED OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY." I AM PUZZLED AS TO WHAT GARBA MEANT. AT ANY RATE, I GOT NO HINT OF THIS FROM AKADIRI, WHO IMPLIED THAT GARBA REMAINED COMMITTED TO A SERIOUS EFFORT TO PRODUCE RESULTS FROM AN APRIL MEETING IN LAGOS. AKADI SAID IT WOULD NOE AT TNA MINISTERIAL LEVEL, HOPEFULLY FOLLOWED SHORTLY THEREAFTER BY A SUMMIT TO RATIFY ITS CONCLUSIONS.
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